

fact, and were now shielding themselves behind a flaw or technicality in the 7th section of that ordinance. If they had opened the books, as that section required, this Committee would not have been troubled with this investigation. It was for the Committee to say whether they could shield themselves behind technicality. By Mr. Brock's own testimony, the moment they found out that they could get rid of that very vital part of the ordinance, they did so. The granting of the charter was not a matter of right, but of favor. As to the testimony, it was not to be expected that men who would receive a bribe, as public officers, would not deny their guilt under oath. It was for the Committee to say for what purpose the \$7,500 was used, in view of the unsatisfactory explanation that had been made of it. The evidence certainly approximated as close as possible to the fraud alleged. If this Legislature should confirm this grant, it would set a precedent for corruption, and allow foreign corporations to come in and seize upon the very vitals of the commonwealth. He protested, in the name of Baltimore, against this thing, as having been done by fraud. The imputation was at least cast upon these applicants; money had been employed improperly, and it was for them to clear themselves of the imputation. The principle that a man must be presumed innocent until he is proven guilty, was reversed in this case. He was not here to discuss the legality or illegality of the 7th section. He cared not if Brock & Co. were here without the imputation of fraud, so long as they had not carried out in good faith the provisions of the ordinance, they had no right to ask a charter; and even though the loss of the charter would involve the loss of a million dollars to them, they should under no circumstances be allowed a charter, without complying with the ordinance, and opening the books.

Mr. Alexander called attention to the act of 1838, chapter 226, empowering the Mayor and City Council to open and close streets. This was the first time he had heard it urged that the imputation of fraud against a man, was to be taken as evidence of guilt.

The Chairman understood the idea to be, that these men were asking a favor, and therefore they ought to come with clean hands.

Mr. Pinkney Whyte then submitted a number of affidavits and letters, refuting the charges made in the letters heretofore received by the Committee, that the assignees were Black Republicans.

The affidavits and letters were read.

Mr. Whyte then offered to read a series of letters written by Mr. Mankin to some party in Philadelphia. He would first, however, ask Mr. Mankin if that was his hand writing?

Mr. Mankin having looked at the letters, said that it was, but objected to any private isolated letter of his being read, unless the whole correspondence could be produced.

The Committee unanimously agreed that Mr. Mankin had a right to say whether the letters should be read or not.

The counsel expressed their willingness to withdraw the letters, if Mr. Mankin objected.

Mr. Mankin stated his reasons, at length, for not wishing the letters read.

They were accordingly withdrawn, and the investigation closed.